

RESPONDING TO STUDENT BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY



Rationale

St Joseph's School, Payneham has a duty of care to its students and the school community to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment.

The school promotes positive social behaviours and practices that are based on the Catholic values and beliefs of love, respect, compassion, sensitivity, forgiveness, reconciliation and justice for all students, families and staff.

Our school community does not tolerate bullying and harassment. This policy outlines the obligations and processes for St Joseph's Payneham to prevent and respond to bullying and harassment involving its students.

Definitions

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour, that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons (The *National Safe Schools Framework 2011*).

Types of Bullying can include:

- Verbal – Name calling, teasing, putting someone down, threatening to cause someone harm.
- Non-verbal – Refusal to communicate, ignoring, feigning to be harmed to have someone falsely 'get into trouble'.
- Physical – Poking, hitting, punching, kicking, spitting, tripping or pushing someone, breaking someone's belongings, pulling faces or making rude hand signals.
- Social – Lying, spreading rumours, playing horrible jokes, leaving someone out on purpose, embarrassing someone in public, making suggestive remarks, humiliation, or manipulation.
- Cyberbullying – Using technology to hurt someone else by sending hurtful messages, pictures or comments.

Harassment is any type of deliberate, uninvited behaviour that is considered unacceptable to the community. It may offend, embarrass and/or scare. It could be sexual, target people because of their race, religion, gender (including gender identity), disability, culture; it may even stem from jealousy. Such behaviour could be verbal, non-verbal, or physical and may include physical aggression, offensive jokes, comments or notes, or unwanted touching, and can also happen via social media.

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person/s that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual conduct which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated, where that reaction to the conduct is reasonable in the circumstances. Sexual harassment can be a single incident, repeated or continuous, direct or indirect, and take various forms.

There can be negative situations at school between students which, whilst being potentially upsetting for students, are not bullying.

These include:

- *Mutual Conflict Situations* which arise where there is disagreement between students, but not an imbalance of power. Mutual conflict situations are monitored as they can evolve into a bullying situation.
- *One-Off Acts (of aggression or meanness)* including single incidents of loss of temper, shouting or swearing do not normally constitute bullying. However, it is recognised that multiple 'one-off acts', by varying individuals, can, and do, affect an individual's self-esteem.

Responsibility

The following information sets out levels of responsibility for all involved at St Joseph's Payneham in creating the conditions for learning within a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment.

Our school has a responsibility to:

- Support all its students to feel safe from bullying and harassment at school.
- To educate students about bullying i.e., what it is, how to identify it, and how to call it out.
- Create a safe, nurturing and respectful school environment which promotes positive relationships.
- Promote diversity amongst all individuals that demonstrate Catholic values.
- Implement classroom and school-wide approaches to develop social and emotional capabilities in students that are consistent across the school.
- Monitor student behaviours, both in the classroom and during play periods; and notify parents/caregivers of any concerns.

- Provide staff with professional learning to keep up-to-date with current evidence-based strategies, including the introduction of The Berry Street Education Model (BSEM) in 2021/2022. BSEM provides strategies for teaching and learning that enables teachers/staff to increase engagement of students with complex, unmet learning needs and to successfully improve all students' self-regulation, relationships, wellbeing, growth and academic achievement.
- Develop strategies to manage and prevent bullying and harassment behaviours.
- Promote kindness in the community and recognise such acts.
- Educate and empower students to build, maintain and restore relationships between themselves and others through Restorative Justice Practices. Restorative dialogue is a tool used by the school to help students process an incident of wrongdoing or conflict. This dialogue focuses on the incident and allows the person to think about how his/her actions affected others. It encourages empathy, accountability, expression of feelings and thoughts, and problem solving to occur*.
- Educating and providing strategies for students to stand up and speak up to bullying behaviour, towards themselves and other students.
- Maintain policies and plans that encourage positive student behaviour; recognising and reinforcing student achievement, behaviour and wellbeing.
- Promote a culture of reporting bullying that enables students, and parents or caregivers to report any incidents to the appropriate person (i.e., Class Teacher or School Leadership), knowing that it will be followed-up.
- Ensure that any alleged harassment and bullying incidents are documented and are taken seriously, sympathetically, promptly and confidentially.
- Provide access to the Bullying and Harassment Policy to all community members.
- Review, evaluate and update the Bullying and Harassment Policy on a regular basis.
- **Restorative Practices professional learning for staff is on the schedule in the near future.*

Students have a responsibility to:

- Respect individual differences and diversity.
- Follow the school guidelines on bullying and harassment.
- Participate in learning activities and experiences that address understandings, values and skills relating to bullying and harassment.
- Act responsibly and safely when using technology at school, considering the wellbeing of self and others.
- Agree that any social networking site that identifies the school by name or image or implication is part of the school environment and may be dealt with according to the schools' policies and bullying and harassment procedures.
- Report incidents of bullying and harassment to a staff member at school, as well as parents or caregivers, as soon as it happens.
- Stand up and speak up to bullying behaviour, by reporting the behaviour to a staff member, or trusted adult.
- Seek support from a trusted staff member if bullied and harassed.

Parent and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- Read, sign and abide by the Conditions of Enrolment and School Code of Conduct.
- Work collaboratively with the school in providing opportunities for education on issues related to student safety and wellbeing.
- Treat all members of the school community with dignity and respect.
- Be aware of the school bullying and harassment procedures and guidelines.
- Support their children to understand bullying behaviour, to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible online behaviour.
- Discuss appropriate responses to bullying and cyber-bullying, encouraging children to disclose to a trusted adult if this occurs.
- Report incidents of bullying and harassment to a staff member at school (i.e., Class Teacher or School Leadership).
- Work collaboratively and calmly with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

4 Interventions

Student Intervention

If students are being harassed or bullied, they can influence what happens next. Here are some strategies to assist students with managing a situation:

- Keep a distance from bullying and harassment.
- Don't bully the person or people back.
- Tell them what they are doing is not ok.
- Talk to an adult you trust (teacher, school leadership, parent, relative or carer) and explain what's happening.
- Have someone help you report the bullying and harassment to the school as soon as possible.

School Intervention

Our school endeavours to:

- Create a school environment where students build and maintain healthy relationships with others.
- Take time to properly investigate an incident, providing opportunity for dialogue and decision-making between all relevant stakeholders (this will likely involve one on one conversation, and group discussion, depending on the matter).
- Address harms, needs, obligations, and causes of conflict and harm.
- Encourage for the perpetrator/s to take responsibility for their actions.
- Provide assurance to victims that they are not at fault and their confidentiality will be respected.
- Take time to understand any concerns of individuals involved.
- Maintain records of reported bullying and harassment incidents.
- Support students in their ability to make suitable decisions and solve problems when interacting with others.
- Offer school counselling services to both bullies and victims, as required.
- Implement effective follow up strategies, in consultation with those involved.
- Provide consequences and follow up based on the situation and nature of the incident.

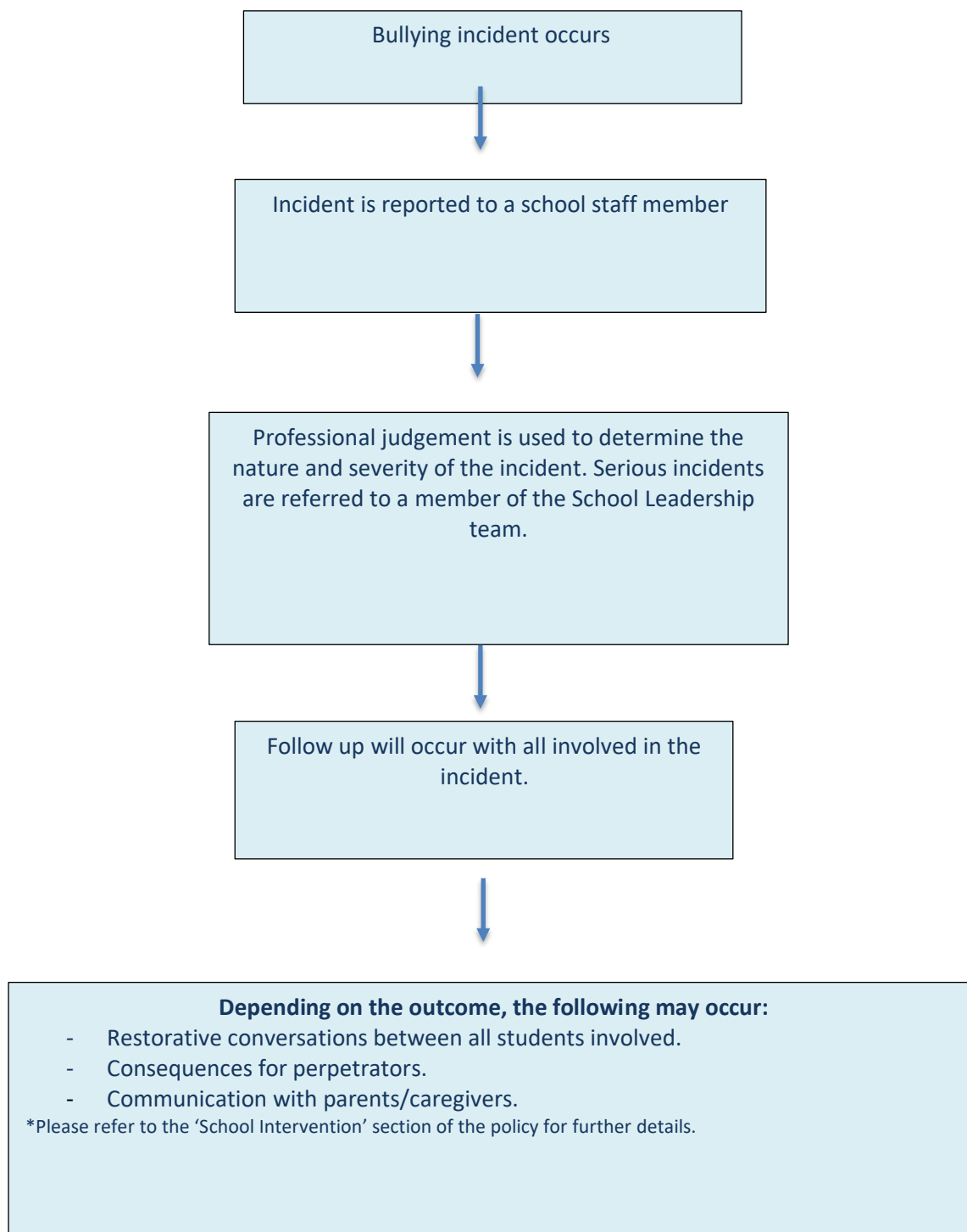
Action taken up by the school (for the perpetrator) may involve:

- Exclusion from class or specific activity or event for a set period of time.
- Exclusion from the yard for a set period of time.
- Community service within the school for a set period of time.
- Development of an individual behaviour management plan for a set period of time. This plan may provide consequences, made in consultation with the student/family, and is reviewed regularly. The plan is communicated with the students' parents or caregivers.
- Shadowing (by support staff), during play periods.
- Withdrawal from class for a set period of time (both internally and externally).
- Suspension for a set period of time.
- Transferring to another school or expulsion.

Action taken up by the school (for the victim/s) may involve:

- Provide strategies to encourage victim/s to build other friendships and provide support, as required.
- Check-ins, with class teacher/s, for a period of time.
- Shadowing (by support staff), during play periods.
- Joining the 'Wellbeing Club'.

5 Incident Flowchart



6 Resources for Parents and Students

The following organisations assist schools, families and young people with information regarding the health and wellbeing of young people.

The websites listed below provide helpful resources and fact sheets on topics such as anxiety, depression, bullying and how to support your child:

Kids Helpline

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

1800 55 1800
(free phone call)

Cyber safety

<https://esafety.gov.au/>

Bullying No Way

<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>

Smiling Mind

<https://smilingmind.com.au/>

Beyond Blue

<https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>

Berry Street (Parenting and Family Services)

<https://www.berrystreet.org.au/what-we-do/parenting-and-family-services>

24-hour support

Where families, children and young people need urgent assistance, these services are available from 7:15am-9:15pm, 7 days a week (calls outside these times will be redirected to the national Health Direct helpline).

Parents Helpline (Child and Youth Health)

1300 364 100

Please contact the school for further information.

Address: 78 Portrush Road Payneham South, 5070

Phone: (08) 8206 5100

Web Address: www.stjopayn.catholic.edu.au

Email address: info@stjopayn.catholic.edu.au

7 Revision Record

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